

This Business Plan extract contains information in relation to the delivery of the Council's following strategic priority area

Employment, Learning, Skills and Community

To encourage investment, enterprise and business growth, and improve the opportunities for learning and development together with the skills and employment prospects of residents and the workforce so that they are able to feel included socially and financially.

Key Developments

Employment Learning and Skills

The Council adopts a multi-faceted approach to developing learning and employment opportunities within the borough and works at both a local level, for example through engagement and collaboration with learning establishments such as local colleges and library services, and regionally through initiatives that are supported by the Liverpool City Region.

Apprenticeships

The Liverpool City Region (LCR) Apprenticeship Hub hosted by Halton's ELS division this year delivered a successful and large Skills Show at the Exhibition Centre Liverpool with over 4,058 visitors in attendance from across the City Region. The event presented 104 exhibition stands hosted by 109 different organisations and offered a very interactive experience for those taking part.

The LCR Construction, Visitor Economy, Advanced Manufacturing, Low Carbon and Employability Skills for Growth Action Plans were launched, which set out the key skills and employment requirements and are part of a suite of 14 Skills for Growth Action Plans to be delivered by March 2019, which HBC manages on behalf of the Combined Authority.

The new Employer & Apprentice Ambassador Network was launched in January 2019 highlighting best practice in all LCR Local Enterprise Partnership priority sectors.

The LCR Apprenticeship Hub Team commissioned a further 80 school performances from Open the Door Theatre Company and a Skills Show took place in Halton in March 2019.

The LCR Apprenticeship Graduation Ceremony took place in March 2019 at St George's Hall in Liverpool to honour those apprentices that completed their programme in the 2017/18 academic year.

The Apprenticeship Hub has so far supported 14,294 individuals and completed 850 outreach meetings in Liverpool City Region, of which 1,711 individuals (12%) and 138 outreach meetings (16%) have been in Halton.

Adult and Family Learning

A review and subsequent redevelopment of the Family Learning and Children's Centre curriculum offer took place in 2018 -19, maximising uptake across the borough. Additional crèche places were allocated to support with increasing accessibility.

Promotional Materials were developed to re-launch offer and maximise uptake, a more professional look to the offer.

The service was promoted at the Halton Head Teachers' Forum and launched the new Family Learning offer, resulting in 48% of Halton schools engaged across the borough. (Previously 36%).

During 2018 – 19 a Marketing Strategy was developed to include an improved digital presence which has resulted in a 10% increase in enrolments compared with the previous year with over 35% of these coming from ‘new’ learners to the service.

Links have been strengthened with Riverside College in preparation for Devolution- Joint CIW, curriculum mapping, and progression links for learners and support has been extended to include Level 1 & 2 IT and Business Planning and Marketing.

Halton People into Jobs

Intermediate Labour Market Placements (ILMs)

ILMs offer meaningful career opportunities for Halton residents who find themselves further away from the labour market. They provide opportunities that would not normally be available to them due to a lack of skills or experience. By 31 July 2018 142 participants had been supported to obtain an ILM placement in Halton.

This approach resulted in 46% of participants being retained by their employer after the ILM ended and 20% finding alternative employment.

Households into Work

Working with the household as a whole has proven to be extremely valuable in supporting clients who may have disengaged from employment and skills services in the past. Through this Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) pilot the Halton People Into Jobs service has supported 57 households with positive outcomes, including employment, learning and voluntary work.

Year 3 delivery to March 2020 will focus on achieving DWP performance measures including the number of households where individuals have completed at least one progress measure, the number of households where individuals have completed at least two progress measures and the number of individuals moved into employment: proportion of households where individual has moved into work (taken to be earnings equivalent to 16 hours per week for 4 weeks).

Work and Health Programme

The Work and Health programme reached its first year of delivery on 27th November 2018. Over 200 referrals have been received from Runcorn and Widnes Jobcentres. Halton People into Jobs has achieved some positive outcomes for long term unemployed customers with complex health conditions. Excellent partnership links have been developed to ensure participants are receiving relevant support to progress them into employment or self-employment during the 15months on programme. HPIJ will focus on achieving 100% of profiled job starts and 60% of profiled job outcomes this financial year.

Community & Environment

Library Service:

Library Services continue to provide an expanding range of services to the local community that reflect a changing use of mediums for both learning and leisure. At present there are 25,000 active members of the library, with book loans increasing and eBook and e-audio loans rising by 50% during 2018 - 19.

The new [library service strategy](#) has been now been approved by the Council with the central mission to achieve the best outcomes for the people of Halton through access to knowledge and creative activity.

This mission statement is underpinned by a set of pledges i.e.:

- *We will inspire a community of readers*
- *We will support the health and wellbeing of the community*
- *We will offer welcoming, vibrant spaces for people to meet*
- *We will support learning at all ages*
- *We will offer access to inspiring cultural activity*
- *We will reach out to the community and expand activity across the Borough*

The strategy is being delivered through a programme of innovative and exciting events across all libraries and the service now produces a substantial quarterly brochure of activity. This is made possible through receipt of a number of external funding streams predominantly from Arts Council England.

Projects to support the achievement of the strategy goals include the expansion of the Home Library Service and recruitment of a support worker to deliver this service to customers unable to access the library buildings.

The Summer Reading Challenge increased participation rates during 2018 - 19 with 1100 children signing up to read 6 books over the summer holidays with a lunch club being launched which provides a free packed lunch to children attending events.

Widnes Library has been reduced to one floor and fully refurbished as part of the Council's drive to maximise the potential of its building assets whilst minimising operational costs in order to sustain future provision. Smaller changes have also taken place at Ditton and Runcorn Libraries following the closure of the Halton Direct Link facilities within those buildings. Libraries are also undertaking work as part of the Liverpool City Region transformation stream.

The successful introduction of the community Wi-Fi network available in libraries has resulted in a much more reliable service to library customers and Library staff are now able to offer increased assistance for customers requiring support to develop their digital skills for both leisure and work related opportunities.

[Libraries Connected](#) is now the national sector support organisation for public libraries.

Sport and Recreation

The Sport and Recreation service has a central role in delivering on the overall well-being of the Halton population. From improving health outcomes through participating in sport and physical activity; to providing opportunities to build confidence and learn skills provided by the many volunteering opportunities provided every week and sporting events and competitions.

The service has two distinct areas:

- Sports Development Team – development of programmes and activities to support the local infrastructure and encourage residents to start and stay active, including day to day operations at Frank Myler Pavilion and facilitating Grass Sport hire and Bowling bookings.

- Management of the Councils 3 Leisure Centres. Kingsway Leisure Centre, Brookvale Recreation Centre and Runcorn Swimming Pool.

The Sports Development Team have worked closely with partners and young people to develop and deliver an extensive programme of holiday programmes and evening and weekend activities that encourage active lifestyles for an early age and Leisure Centres provide a broad range of activity including free swim sessions for all under 8's within the borough.

In addition local sports clubs are actively supported in engaging with the community and attracting members to take part in club activities for both the purpose of physical exercise and the development of individual character and team building attributes that can be derived through engagement.

Such support includes the provision of information and expertise to Volunteers, Coaches, Clubs and Committees to develop and strengthen the club base within the borough. This includes the provision of workshops covering, for example, funding information clinics, First Aid and Safeguarding Training and linking with the Governing Bodies of Sport.

Projects during 2018 – 19 have included, for example, Schools Sports Coaching and Leadership Awards as well as outreach activity within the Council's parks and open spaces. Activities vary from football and 'Couch to 2K' community sessions with Brownies and parents as SportsClub to speed stacking and problems focussed upon developing agility and speed.

2018 – 19 also saw the delivery of a wide range of community led interventions to encourage adult participation in sport and exercise with over 100 activities each week in the Get Active and Walking for Health programmes. Such programmes provide a vehicle for providing exit routes for GP Referrals and other Health Improvement Programmes and annual participation rates are approximately 75,000.

Activities on the timetables range from easy gentle exercise sessions, such as Heal the Body Yoga and Tai-Chi to targeted classes for particular health conditions such as movement therapy which is a gentle chair-based exercise using gel-balls for hand exercise and therapy bands to improve muscle strength

The Social Sports timetable provides an opportunity for individuals to exercise at their own pace and meet new people through, for example, New Age Bowling / Kurling, table tennis and walking football /netball.

The Couch to 5K initiative has also proved successful in attracting people who may wish to get started in engaging in physical activity and participants follow a 10 week programme with coaching to motivate and improve the number of minutes being run each week with walk-run intervals being determined at the individual's own pace. At week 10 individuals are invited to join the weekly local Park Runs at Victoria or Phoenix Parks, which have 2,288 and 1,189 registered participants respectively.

For those who are more engaged and experienced with exercise techniques there are a number of high-intensity classes aimed at strength and fitness challenges such as Keetlercise, Metafit and Zumba. In addition each of the Leisure Centres provide Fitness Suites which provide a wide range of cardio and resistance equipment

Emerging Issues

Employment Learning and Skills

Apprenticeships

The Council employment contracts for the Apprenticeship Hub team are due to end on 31st March 2019 and options to secure sustainability with provision set out in the existing ESIS contract and other funding resources are being explored by the Combined Authority/Local Enterprise Partnership.

Apprenticeship Reforms came into effect in May 2017. The number of apprenticeship starts delivered across the Liverpool City Region at the end of January 2018 equated to 33% of the previous year's total delivery, this compared to 38% and 40% in the North West and England respectively.

There has been a shift in delivery away from Level 2 to advance and higher level apprenticeships and the sectoral make up of apprenticeship starts is also shifting, with proportional growth in construction, planning and built environment and retail and commercial enterprise.

Potential reduction in apprenticeship funding bands may result in some colleges or training providers viewing some apprenticeships as non-viable in terms of delivery costs and the introduction of T-Levels in 2019 may have an impact on the demand for Apprenticeships.

Reputational impact of Apprenticeships in the region is facing more scrutiny due to recent high profile closures of training providers such as: First4Skills, Learn Direct and 3AAA by Ofsted/Education Funding Agency and Skills.

Adult & Family Learning

Need to continue to maximise Adult & Family Learning digital presence to ensure a strong stream of learners are accessing our curriculum offer, to support with increasing enrolment numbers.

Continue to ensure the best outcomes for learners are achieved, to support them in closing the gap towards employment or further learning and progression. Curriculum offer, observations of teaching, learning and assessment and a new Performance Management Framework are key areas to support with this.

Continue to ensure that the best offer is achieved with the allocated Adult Education Budget, maximise effectiveness and efficiency as we move towards Devolution.

To identify and bid for additional funding streams where possible to increase opportunities for wider provision, particularly around well-being/mental health support, with 48% of adult learners presenting with some form of learning barrier or challenge. Also, an area schools have requested provision for, for their parents. Budget constraints are hindering our ability to offer this on the scale requested but a key area linked to local need. Similarly, funding prohibits the opportunity to support those learners with maths and English skills in a small group/1:1 situation, yet more and more learners are presenting themselves with these needs.

To continue to ensure that the curriculum offer meets the local and regional need and we are at least in line with our competitors wherever possible. Joint curriculum mapping with region's Adult Learning providers.

To increase the access of IT provision for those working within HBC. Attendance at Divisional Managers meeting/Team meetings to be scheduled for Adult Learning Team to discuss offer and link to EDRs - develop personal links and networking.

To reach a wider learner pool to increase enrolment numbers and increase the % of paying learners to support the service budget. Marketing and Business Intelligence Data to support with this, particular around targeting.

Recruitment of suitable teaching staff challenge - poor level of candidates coming through to interview. Three rounds of unsuccessful recruitment drives, possibly due to the sessional tutor contract not offering the financial security for prospective tutors.

Linking community curriculum offer to Skills strategies, ensuring provision is aligned to City Region priorities. Working with regions Adult Learning Managers to map curriculum to priorities.

Strengthen data around progression for learners who have completed a community learning course - plotting next steps in employability provision and/or further progression opportunities

The Management Information System- 'PICS' presents some challenges around data collection, new system needed but will need to run two systems until new system is embedded and staff confidence levels are appropriate. The 'TERM' system- looking like the most viable option and would bring us in line with other Adult Learning providers In the City Region. Timescales for this to ensure full launch September 2019.

As an externally funded Division, we are completely reliant on securing further funding to sustain the services. This constant uncertainty around funding does lead to the departure of key staff as contracts approach their end date.

Many external funding opportunities require match funding. Reducing matching funding and income could challenge the viability of delivering some employment services.

Devolution of the Adult Education Budget may lead to both opportunities and challenges. Whilst 2017/18 grant allocations are confirmed for 2018/19, it is unclear if future allocations will be awarded on a 1 year basis or 3 year. Also, unclear as to whether additional allocations can be bid for beyond 2018/19.

Ways to Work

Between September 2019 and June 2020, the division will deliver on an additional 58 ILMs.

Work and Health Programme

The Work and Health programme reached its first year of delivery on 27th November 2018. Over 200 referrals were received in year 1. A significant number of inappropriate referrals have been received from both Runcorn and Widnes Jobcentres which has had a detrimental impact on delivery and performance.

The Work and Health programme is predominantly a voluntary 15 month employment programme that participants must be willing to engage in to access support to address any health or work related issues they may have. Customers have not been given full information about the programme and therefore have disengaged impacting on referral to job start and referral to job outcome rates.

Project Managers and the Ingeus Supply Chain Manager will continue to work with Jobcentres to try and improve the quality of referrals and ensure that Work Coaches are not being driven by referral targets alone. This piece of work will continue as we are being measured on achieving 100% of profiled job starts and 60% of profiled job outcomes this financial year.

Community & Environment

Library Service:

The increasing popularity of Halton's libraries will continue to put pressure on the available resources and we are actively exploring ways to ensure services are sustainable, as well as innovative and attractive. Investing in staff development is vital to ensure the team evolve alongside the library offer with advocacy at the core of this.

The ageing population will increase use of the already popular Home Library Service with our buildings potentially playing a special role tackling loneliness at the heart of the community.

There will be demand for digital literacy to support our economic future and tackle the lack of science, technology, engineering and maths skills in our future workforce and the library service offers introduction to informal science learning, including coding and robotics from an early age with this expanding to wider age groups.

At the earliest life stages libraries are playing a continuing role in school readiness by encouraging pre-school literacy and negating future inequality that contributes to ending the cycle of poverty.

The importance of exploring alternative income generation models is key to continuing to offer innovative stretch activity in the libraries. Projects are increasingly externally funded so key staff are developing the skills to successfully bid to numerous organisations. The Council will continue to trial a variety of ticket sales models to support development of our cultural programme of events. Expanding the use of financial donations and bequests and looking into how contributions from trusts and philanthropists could be used to add even more value to the library offer.

During 2019 – 20 the Sports and Recreation Service will be working on producing a new strategy, which will support the delivery of the five outcomes in the Governments Sporting Future: A New Strategy for an Active Nation i.e.:

- Physical wellbeing
- Mental wellbeing
- Individual development
- Social and community development
- Economic development

Appendix 1

Key Objectives, Milestones and Measures

Service Objective: EEP 05	To promote access to learning for those who need it most.		
Key Milestone(s) (19 / 20)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ To submit one bid for external funding to help sustain the service by April 2019 ▪ To extend the LCR Apprenticeship Hub Team by April 2019 ▪ To support 15% of those households registered on the Households into Work into work by December 2019 		
Responsible Officer:	Siobhan Saunders	Linked Indicators:	N/A

Service Objective: CE 02	Increase the use of libraries – in alignment with the Society of Chief Librarians Universal Offers and local needs deliver a modern, vibrant public library service; promoting and supporting reading, health, learning, information, digital and culture. Improving life chances through skills development and access to new opportunities.		
Key Milestone(s) (19 / 20)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Deliver a programme of extended informal learning opportunities meeting identified local targets - March 2020 ▪ Develop a programme of cultural activity meeting identified local targets – March 2020 		
Responsible Officer:	Library Strategy & Development Manager	Linked Indicators:	CE LI 07 and 08

Halton Borough Council Business Plan Extract (2018 – 19) for Employment, Learning, Skills and Community

Ref	Description	17/18 Actual	18/19 Target	18/19 Actual	19/20 Target
EEP LI 07	Number of companies benefitting from the Council's intensive Key Account Management Service.	New Indicator for 2018/19	50	TBC	TBC
EEP LI 08	Number of Enrolments (Adult Learning).	1,960	2,950	TBC	TBC
EEP LI 09	Number of People supported into work.	319	400	TBC	TBC
EEP LI 10	Percentage of learners achieving accreditation.	56%	42%	TBC	TBC
EEP LI 11	Total number of job starts on DWP programme (People Plus).	22	9	TBC	TBC
EEP LI 12	Total number of job starts on DWP programme (Ingeus).	43	70	TBC	TBC
EEP LI 13	Number of new starts into permitted/paid work for local people with disabilities (over 12 month period).	36	40	TBC	TBC
EEP LI 14	Number of Businesses Supported.	658	700	TBC	TBC
EEP LI 15	Number of individuals supported into paid work placements (ILMs)	New Indicator for 2018/19	58	TBC	TBC
EEP LI 16	Number of adult learners who feel prepared for choosing the next steps (e.g. into employment, another course, college/university etc.)	New Indicator for 2018/19	100%	TBC	TBC
EEP LI 17	Number of adult learners who have progressed onto another course	New Indicator for 2018/19	50%	TBC	TBC
CE LI 07	Number of active users (physical & digital resources) of the library service during the last 12 months.	574,045	400,000	TBC	TBC
CE LI 08	Number of physical and virtual visits to libraries (annual total)	614,045	600,000	TBC	TBC

Ref	Description	17/18 Actual	18/19 Target	18/19 Actual	19/20 Target
CE LI 09	Increase in percentage of the population taking part in sport and physical activity at least twice in the last month (KPI 1 from Active Lives survey)	74.3%	Target to be agreed and established from baseline data in next financial year	TBC	TBC
CE LI 10	Percentage of people physically inactive (KPI 2 from Active Lives survey)	27.6%	TBC	TBC	TBC
CE LI 11	Percentage of adults utilising outdoor space for exercise/ health reasons (MENE survey)	574,045	TBC	TBC	TBC